

Town of Acton COMPLETE STREET POLICY	
Effective Date	[insert]
Expiration Date	None
Date Last Revised	
Planning Board vote to recommend	
Selectmen vote to adopt Policy	

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

WHEREAS, Goal #3 of the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan is to improve connections, particularly emphasizing safe and pleasant ways to travel through walking, biking, and by way of public transportation; and

WHEREAS, Goal #2 of the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan is to ensure environmental sustainability by reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

WHEREAS, The Town of Acton has a multiple existing and proposed off-street multi-use paths, including the Assabet River Rail Trail and the Bruce Freeman Trail, and connecting these trails through a safe network of on-street facilities is a priority; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety, comfort, and accessibility for users of all ages and abilities and for all the users of our streets, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets can reduce congestion by providing safe travel choices that encourage non-motorized transportation options, increasing the overall capacity of the transportation network as well as decreasing consumer transportation costs and overall carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets support economic growth and community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets enhance safe walking and bicycling options for school-age children, in recognition of the objectives of the national Safe Routes to School program and Physical Activity Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets can help reduce crashes and injuries and their costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Selectmen adopt this Complete Streets Policy.

Vision and Purpose:

Complete Streets are designed and operated to provide safety and accessibility for all the users of our streets, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles and for people of all ages and of all abilities. Furthermore, Complete Streets principles contribute toward the safety, health, economic viability, and quality of life in a community by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities. The purpose of the Town of Acton's Complete Streets Policy, therefore, is to accommodate all street users by creating a street network that meets the needs of individuals utilizing a variety of transportation modes. It is the intent of the Town of Acton to formalize the planning, design, operation and maintenance of streets so that they are safe for all users of all ages and abilities as a matter of routine. This Policy directs decision-makers to consistently plan, design, construct and maintain streets to accommodate all anticipated users including, but not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, emergency vehicles, and freight and commercial vehicles.

Core Commitment:

The Town of Acton recognizes that users of various modes of transportation, including, but not limited to, pedestrians, cyclists, transit and school bus riders, motorists, delivery and service personnel, freight haulers, and emergency responders, are legitimate users of streets and deserve safe facilities. "All Users" includes users of all ages and abilities.

The Town of Acton recognizes that all projects, new, maintenance, improvement, or reconstruction, are potential opportunities to apply Complete Streets design principles. The Town will, to the maximum extent practical, design, construct, improve, maintain, and operate all streets to provide for a comprehensive and integrated street network for people of all ages and abilities.

Complete Streets design principles shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects. To the maximum extent practical:

- (1) All transportation infrastructure, and street design and construction projects requiring funding or approval by the Town of Acton shall adhere to (comply with) the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy.
- (2) Projects funded by the State or Federal government with Chapter 90 funds, City improvement grants, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Capital Funding or other State and Federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall adhere to (comply with) the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy, subject to and as may be modified by funding agency guidelines and standards.
- (3) Private developments and related or corresponding street design and construction components shall adhere to (comply with) the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy.

(4) State-owned streets shall comply with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy, including the design, construction, and maintenance of such streets within Town boundaries, subject to and as may be modified by MassDOT guidelines and standards.

Exemptions:

- A. State Route 2 through the Town of Acton.
- B. The Assabet River Rail Trail and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.
- C. All transportation facilities that are limited to non-motorized transportation modes, such as multi-use paths, pedestrian paths and malls, bicycle paths, and walking and hiking trails.
- D. Other transportation infrastructure may be exempt from this Policy, upon approval by the Board of Selectmen, where documentation and data indicate that:
 - 1. The cost or impacts of implementing this Policy are excessively disproportionate to the need for this Policy and the benefits derived from its implementation.
 - 2. Other Town policies, regulations, or requirements contradict or preclude the implementation of this Policy, after such policies, regulations, and requirements have been examined and updated to be consistent with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy

Best Practices:

The Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy will focus on developing a connected, integrated network that serves all street users. Complete Streets principles will be integrated into policies, planning, and design of all types of public and private projects, including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, redevelopment, repair, and maintenance of transportation facilities on, adjacent to, and related to streets,

To the greatest extent possible, implementation of the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy will be carried out cooperatively within and between all departments in the Town of Acton, private developers, and State, regional—including the Acton Boxborough Regional School District, and Federal agencies.

Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context sensitive manner in which project implementation is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. The context-sensitive approach to process and design includes a range of goals by considering stakeholder and community values on a level plane with the project need. It includes goals related to livability, connectivity, and sustainability with greater participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic,

historical, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

The Town of Acton recognizes that "Complete Streets" may be achieved through single elements incorporated into a particular project or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.

The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of Complete Streets including:

- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Project Design and Development Guidebook
- The latest edition of American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets
- The United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Design Controls (2009).
- The Architectural Access Board (AAB) 521CMR Rules and Regulations
- Documents and plans created by and for the Town of Acton, such as bicycle and pedestrian network plans.

Complete Streets implementation and effectiveness should be constantly evaluated for success and opportunities for improvement.

Implementation:

The Town shall make Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users, and shall work in coordination with other departments, agencies, and jurisdictions to achieve Complete Streets.

The Town shall review and either revise or develop proposed revisions to all appropriate planning documents (master plans, open space and recreation plan, etc.), zoning and subdivision rules and regulations, laws, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs, and templates to integrate Complete Streets principles so as to be consistent with the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy. A committee of relevant stakeholders selected by the Town Manager or his/her designee will facilitate the implementation of this initiative.

The Town shall maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facility infrastructure that will prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk and bikeway network. The Town will reevaluate prioritizations of Capital Improvement Projects to encourage implementation of this Policy.

The Town will create flexible, "best scenario" cross sections with complete street treatments for different types of streets as a guidance tool.

The Town will train pertinent town staff and decision-makers on the content of the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy and best practices for implementing this Policy through workshops and other appropriate means.

The Town will utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.

The Town will conduct a needs assessment to determine and appropriately plan for future financial costs, capital or otherwise associated with implementation of this Policy.

The Town will seek out appropriate sources of funding and grants for implementation of Complete Streets policies.

The Town will develop performance measures to periodically assess the rate, success and effectiveness of implementing the Town of Acton Complete Streets Policy. The [designated committee – name if applicable] will determine the frequency of assessment and utilize appropriate metrics for analyzing the success of this ordinance. These metrics may include the total number of new bicycle lanes, the linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation, number of retrofitted pedestrian facilities or amenities, number intersection improvements made to improve Level of Service (LOS) and safety for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, rate of crashes by mode, rate of children walking or bicycling to school, and/or number of trips by mode.